

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) An article of footwear comprising a sole and a shell of a composite structure at least in selected locations other than the sole, the composite structure being formed of a first layer and a second layer laid over and inseparably coupled with said first layer at respective interfacing surfaces, said first and second layers being made of materials having different mechanical properties wherein ~~of~~ the layer made of materials with higher mechanical properties is provided with protruding elements that remain inseparably adhering to the interfacing surface of the other layer, which covers the protruding elements and entirely fills their interspace, while the outermost and innermost surfaces of the shell are uniform and substantially smooth, and wherein at least the layer arranged on the outward facing side of the shell is made of a clear material.

2. (Previously Presented) An article of footwear according to claim 1, wherein the layer made of materials with lower mechanical properties is softer and is the one coming directly or indirectly in contact with the foot of the wearer.

3. (Currently Amended) An article of footwear according to claim 1, wherein at least a part of said protruding elements are ribs for stiffening selected locations of lateral and upper portions of the footwear other than the sole of the footwear, through an increase of the moment of inertia of said ~~footwear~~ composite structure with respect to a neutral axis, said ribs being made integral with the layer, of which they are a part, and are projecting from the interface surface of the same layer with no increase in the thickness of the shell.

4. (Previously Presented) An article of footwear according to claim 3, wherein said ribs intersect each other so as to form a truss-like pattern comprising a plurality of knots over a plate.

5. (Previously Presented) An article of footwear according to any of the preceding claims, wherein said some of said protruding elements are so arranged to create inscriptions, images, logotypes or the like on the interface surface of at least one of said layers, and at least the layer arranged on the outward facing side of the footwear is made of a clear material.

6. (Currently Amended) An article of footwear according to claim 5, wherein at least the protruding elements forming said inscriptions, images, logotypes or the like are provided with a luminescent finishing effect and/or in a different color with respect to the layer arranged on the outward facing side of the footwear, ~~which is made of a clear material.~~

7. (Canceled)

8. (Previously Presented) An article of footwear according to claim 1, further comprising a leg piece mounted to said shell, the leg piece being of a structure which is at least in selected locations said composite structure.

9. (Previously Presented) An article of footwear according to claim 1, wherein said material with higher mechanical properties is high grade thermoplastic or thermosetting synthetic material.

10. (Previously Presented) An article of footwear according to claim 1, wherein the material of the other layer is lower grade thermoplastic or thermosetting synthetic material.

11. (Canceled)

12. (New) An article of footwear comprising a sole and a shell of a composite structure at least in selected locations other than the sole, the composite structure being formed of a first layer and a second layer laid over and inseparably coupled with said first layer at respective interfacing surfaces, said first and second layers being made of materials having different mechanical properties wherein the layer made of materials with higher mechanical properties is provided with intersecting protruding elements for stiffening said footwear that remain inseparably adhering to the interfacing surface of the other layer, which covers the protruding elements and entirely fills their interspace, while the outermost and innermost surfaces of the shell are uniform and substantially smooth.